Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 - 113 (Cancelled)

114. (Currently Amended) A method by which multiple clients browse content on a network ~~such as the Internet~~ and preserve access to content that is no longer on the network, the method comprising:

retrieving, for each of the multiple clients, ~~accessing~~ content data items stored at network storage locations, accessing the content data items ~~on the network~~ via ~~one or more~~ a proxy servers;

providing a proxy repository different from the network storage locations and connected to the proxy server;

determining ~~the~~ a digital fingerprint from ~~of an~~ the bits of a content data item that is a one of the content data items retrieved for a one of the multiple clients from a one of the network storage locations ~~of content passing through the proxy server~~;

~~storing the item of content in a content repository connected to the proxy server at a location associated with the digital fingerprint;~~

~~assigning an expiration time to the item of content, before which time deletion is prohibited;~~

testing for whether ~~a~~ the content data item is already stored in the proxy repository by comparing the digital fingerprint of the content data item to the digital fingerprints of content data items already in storage in the proxy repository; ~~and~~

ensuring that a stored data item identical to the content data item exists in the proxy repository by storing the content data item in the proxy repository if comparing establishes that a

data item identical to the content data item is not already stored in the proxy repository, and not storing the content data item in the proxy repository if comparing establishes that a data item identical to the content data item is already stored in the proxy repository;

associating ~~a content~~ the stored data item ~~already stored in the repository~~ with an access authorization credential uniquely associated with ~~an access owner.~~ the one of the multiple clients or a person associated with the one; and

assigning an expiration time to the stored data item, before which time both modification and deletion are prohibited;

whereby the stored data item is preserved and can be retrieved using the access authorization credential even after the content data item is no longer present at the one of the network storage locations.

115. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 114 in which the proxy repository comprises a plurality of storage sites, and a set of rules governing the assignment of the expiration ~~time and deletion~~ time are ~~distributed among a~~ communicated to the plurality of storage sites.

116. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 114 in which the expiration time assigned to the stored data item ~~of content~~ depends upon an expiration ~~times~~ assigned by the one of the multiple clients.

117-163 (Canceled).

164. (New) The method of claim 114 wherein the proxy repository retains all content browsed by the one of the multiple clients, thereby preserving the content after it has been altered or removed from the network.

165. (New) The method of claim 164 wherein the one of the multiple clients uses a search engine to search and access all content which it has ever browsed.

166. (New) The method of claim 114 further comprising using information maintained by the proxy repository, about the number of times that stored data items have been browsed by the multiple clients or how recently the data items have been browsed, in an algorithm that orders Web search results.

167. (New) The method of claim 114 wherein, after the expiration time is assigned, subsequent browsing activity by the multiple clients can cause the expiration time to be changed to a later time but cannot change the expiration time to an earlier time.

168. (New) The method of claim 114 wherein the expiration time is assigned a value that indicates that the stored data item will never expire.

169. (New) The method of claim 114 wherein the network is the Internet, the one of the multiple clients is a Web browser program, the content data item is a Web page, and the one of the network storage locations is a Web server.